

REMARKS

Claims 3, 5, 7, 8, 16, 18, 20 and 21 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 3, 5, 7, 16, 18 and 20 are amended. The amendments introduce no new matter because they are supported by at least the claims as originally filed. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 9-15, 17, 19 and 22-27 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited in those claims. Reconsideration of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116(b)(1) since the amendments: (1) rewrite the allowable claims indicated in the Office Action in independent form; and (2) cancel the rejected claims. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the Final Rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

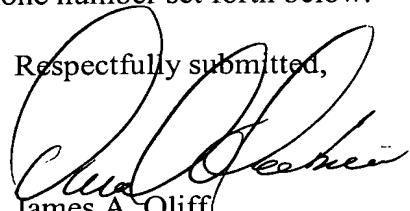
The Office Action, in paragraph 5, indicated that claims 3, 5, 7, 8, 16, 18, 20 and 21 recite allowable subject matter. Specifically, the Office Action indicates that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates this indication of allowability. The above amendments are undertaken in view of this indication of allowability.

The Office Action, in paragraph 3, rejects claims 1, 2, 6, 9-15, 19 and 22-27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,335,951 to Cangiani et al. (hereinafter "Cangiani"). The Office Action, in paragraph 4, rejects claims 4, 14, 15, 17 and 24-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cangiani as applied to claims 1 and 2, in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,445,749 to Feher. The cancellation of claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 9-15, 17, 19 and 22-27 renders these rejections moot.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 3, 5, 7, 8, 16, 18, 20 and 21 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


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